[English]

Dredging at Kandla Port

*214. SHRI VIJAY PATEL : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Kandla Port Trust has formulated a plan or project for dredging the silt;

(b) if so, the estimated cost thereof;

(c) whether the National Ship Design Research Centre has been asked to design the dredger for this purpose; and

(d) if so, the present position and the total time required to build up the dredger and to hand over the same to the Kandla Port Trust?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN) : (a) The estimated cost is Rs. 29 crores for 1996-97 and Rs. 30 crores for 1997-98. Maintenance dredging is done by Dredging Corporation of India throughout the year.

(c) Yes Sir.

(d) It is proposed to replace dredger M.D. Kutch Vallabh at a cost of Rs. 150 crores during the 9th Plan period.

[Translation]

Hepatitis

*215. SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY :

SHRI MANI BHAI RAMJIBHAI CHAUDHARI :

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Desh mein Hepatitis Rog Bade Paimane par Failne ki Ashanka" appearing in the 'Rashtriya Sahara' dated January 7, 1997;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the remedial steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The news-item talks of the danger posed by Hepatitis-B Virus in the country and suggests remedial measures for prevention.

(c) An Expert Committee has given certain recommendations in regard to the introduction of Hepatitis-B under the immunization programe. It has been decided to immunize the hospital workers of Central Government Hospitals in the first instance.

[English]

Population Control

*216. SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether any targets have been fixed to control population during Ninth Five Year Plan;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether uniform laws do not exist to control the population;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) whether there are certain communities, which have been exempted or are not bound to accept the advice to check the population and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI) : (a) and (b) The IX Plan document, which will include Department-wise policies and outlays has not yet been finalised by the Planning Commission. The Approach Paper to the Ninth Plan prepared by the Planning Commission has duly emphasised the urgent need to control rate of growth of population.

(c) to (e) The National Family Welfare Programme is voluntary in nature. The Programme aims to provide information as well as facilities to all the eligible couples irrespective of community. The strategy adopted under the programme is to motivate the people to accept the small family norms.

National Sports Federation

*217. SHRIMATI SARADA TADIPARTHI : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the National Sports Federation has failed to lead the country towards rapid development in the field of sports;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the measures proposed to be taken to broadbase the sporting activities to bring a sense of national pride?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI S.R. BOMMAI) : (a) and (b) It would not be correct to say that the National Sports Federations have failed to lead the country towards rapid development in the field of sports. While it may be difficult to pinpoint any definite set of reasons for India's poor performance at the International level, they could broadly be identified as under :

(i) Lack of long term commitment for the development of sports in India at the National and State level;